

Part VII Speeches

Centennial Handbook



*Feeling overwhelmed about writing
a speech? The sample outline should
relieve some of the pressure.*

Sample Outline for a Speech

Tips for Preparing a Speech or Presentation for Your Special Event

First, Assess your Audience

Who is your audience? What is your audience's current awareness of the Refuge System? What is their knowledge of your refuge? What preconceptions might they have of national wildlife refuges?

(Note: Generally the audience consists of citizens from diverse backgrounds with little awareness of the National Wildlife Refuge System and its inherent biologic, sociologic and economic values).

Purpose

Inform the audience of the National Wildlife Refuge System (and its connection to the Centennial or other special event, such as National Wildlife Refuge Week) and inspire them to want to become personally involved in supporting refuges in their own community, home state or region.

Objective

After listening to your presentation, audience members will:

- understand the rationale for your special event or Centennial promotion.
- be aware of the extraordinary biological diversity and abundance of wildlife conserved by the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- be informed of individual refuges in their community, home state or region and the outstanding characteristics of these refuges.
- become inspired by a positive and powerful vision for the Refuge System that will carry over into the next century of wildlife support.
- become motivated to support the Refuge System and find opportunities to become personally involved in refuges in their community, home state or region.

I) Introduction

Introduces you, your refuge or facility at which you are presenting, to the Refuge System.

Example:

Thank you, and welcome to (National Wildlife Refuge Week) at (Albuquerque's Rio Grande Zoo). The (zoo) has played a leadership role in wildlife conservation and education. I commend (zoo) for its leadership role in working with and for sustaining genetic diversity for many wildlife species, and for supporting wildlife education opportunities for the millions of people who visit every year.

II) Explain National Wildlife Refuge Week (or Centennial Event) as It Relates to the National Wildlife Refuge System

Example:

Today, learning about wildlife, and the need to protect habitat could not be more important. That's what National Wildlife Refuge Week is all about and why I'm here today—to share my joy of wild things so that you also can know the wonder, mysteries, and excitement of wildlife, and can, in turn, share this excitement with your family, friends, and colleagues.

National Wildlife Refuge Week is celebrated annually during the second full week in October. It is the hallmark event, leading up to the National Wildlife Refuge System's Centennial in the year 2003.

III) Identify Major Distinguishing Features of the National Wildlife Refuge System

History

Example:

Let me share with you a few things about the Refuge System. It is the product of a novel, yet ambitious idea—setting aside a network of habitat areas for the conservation of the nation's fish and wildlife. President Theodore Roosevelt

started it with the first national wildlife refuge at Pelican Island in Florida in 1903.

A network of lands containing extraordinary biological diversity

Example:

Today, the Refuge System encompasses more than 93 million acres, including more than 530 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas, with at least one refuge in every state and U.S. Territory. Collectively, these lands embrace awesome beauty and diversity, from Alaska's icy north coast to the balmy Florida Keys, from the Rocky Mountains to the Prairie Potholes, and far beyond to tropical islands in the Caribbean and Pacific.

A network of lands dedicated specifically to wildlife conservation

Example:

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the only one of its kind in the world, dedicated to wildlife and conserving wildlife habitat. Refuges encompass every form of ecosystem in the United States and are home to a great diversity of wildlife, primarily migratory birds, and over 200 threatened or endangered species.

A network for wildlife-dependent recreation

Example:

Refuges are special places because they are the only public lands where people go simply to enjoy wildlife. To the nearly 35 million people who visit refuges each year, they are a mosaic of special places to hunt, fish, enjoy wildlife photography and observation and learn through environmental education and interpretation.

Draw specifics from your refuge

Example:

Here in the (Southwest) we have some of the most unique and outstanding refuges in the System. (Include specifics of refuges in your region and describe their outstanding characteristics.)

IV) A Vision for the National Wildlife Refuge System

Example:

Were he alive today, Teddy Roosevelt would no doubt be pleased that Americans have become world leaders in conserving lands for wildlife. He could point with pride to the pelicans and egrets protected on Pelican Island, to the buffalo roaming on the National Bison Range, and the elk on Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge. These are just a few of the reasons we have to celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week (or event).

But Roosevelt would know that his vision was far from complete. As we approach our Centennial in 2003, let me share with you our ideas of what the Refuge System should be to complete that vision.

- It should be a system that is dedicated to the conservation of habitat for this nation's migratory birds, and other fish and wildlife;
- It should protect a wide diversity of biological communities and ecosystems;
- It should be an international leader in wildlife conservation;
- It should be widely recognized for offering diverse, high quality wildlife-dependent recreation and educational programs, and
- It should be a System that enjoys wide public support.

V) A Call to Action: The National Wildlife Refuge System Needs Your Support

Example:

The Refuge System and each of the more than 530 individual refuges can benefit from support of passionate, motivated, and involved citizens. I call on every one of you here today to join with me and become involved in some small way in one of the national wildlife refuges in your state or near your community. Each one of us has an opportunity to become more involved in the National Wildlife Refuge System by:

- visiting a refuge and participating in bird walks, habitat tours and many other public programs.
- taking part in volunteer programs.
- conducting educational programs in our school system.
- encouraging reporters to write articles about the System.
- joining national and local conservation organizations that support the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- joining an existing Friends group or start a new one.
- letting business owners know that local refuges need their support through public and private partnerships.

VI Close

Example:

The challenge has never been greater and the need for your support for wildlife and conservation has also never been greater. Thank you.

Or end with a quote.

Example:

The famous conservationist, Aldo Leopold wrote in the book, A Sand County Almanac, "There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot." Like Leopold, I am one who cannot, and, I suspect many of you are the same. Thank you.

Useful Quotes

You may want to use these in speeches or publications that your field station generates.

“A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.”
Aldo Leopold

“Wildlife Management is comparatively easy; human management difficult.”
Aldo Leopold

“If you are going to tinker with a system, it’s important to save all the pieces.”
Aldo Leopold

“We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”
Aldo Leopold

“Short-sighted men, in their greed and selfishness will, if permitted, rob our country of half its charm by their reckless extermination of all useful and beautiful wild things.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country. Just as we must conserve our men, women, and children, so we must conserve the resources of the land on which they live...Short of the actual preservation of its existence in a great war, there is none which compares in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“The Nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“It is not what we have as a nation that makes us great; it is how we use it.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“Wild beasts and birds are by right not the property merely of the people who are alive today, but the property of unborn generations, whose belongings we have no right to squander.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“We cannot do great deeds unless we are willing to do the small things that make up the sum of greatness. The welfare of each of us is dependent fundamentally upon the welfare of all of us. I preach the gospel of hope.”
President Theodore Roosevelt

“The human race is challenged more than ever before to demonstrate our mastery—not over nature but of ourselves.”
Rachel Carson

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”
Rachel Carson

“The lasting pleasures of contact with the natural world are not reserved for scientists but are available to anyone who will place himself under the influence of earth, sea and sky, and their amazing life.”
Rachel Carson

“What a country chooses to save is what a country chooses to say about itself.”
Past Service Director Mollie Beattie

“Prairie is much more than land covered with grass. It is a slowly evolved, highly complex organic entity, centuries old...Once destroyed it can never be replaced by man.”
J.E. Weaver, writer

“Many people see the environment as a hostile setting, and humans as separate from it. The fundamental fact is that human health is totally dependent on species.”
Eric Chivian, Harvard Medical School

“Human action can be modified to some extent but human nature cannot be changed.”
President Abraham Lincoln

“I say ‘try;’ if we never try, we shall never succeed.”
President Abraham Lincoln

“If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit.”
Chief Seattle

“The world is a fine place and worth fighting for.”
Ernest Hemingway

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature he finds it attached to the rest of the world.”
John Muir

“The world cares very little about what a man or woman knows; it is what the man or woman is able to do that counts.”
Booker T. Washington

“The face and character of our country are determined by what we do with America and its resources.”
President Thomas Jefferson

“The house of America is founded upon our land and if we keep that whole, then the storm can rage, but the house will stand forever.”
President Lyndon B. Johnson

“God has lent us the earth for our life. It is a great entail. It belongs as much to those who follow us as it does to us. And we have no right, by anything we may do or neglect to do, to involve them in unnecessary penalties, or to deprive them of the benefit which we have in our power to bequeath.”
John Ruskin (1819-1900)

and lastly,

“Never be afraid to show your passion for the resource.”
Dave Stout, USFWS